

The U.S. Department of Labor recently announced Workforce Data Quality Initiative grants totaling \$12.2 million to 13 states. The funds are an important part of the administration's efforts to increase the availability and use of high-quality data. Grants will be used by 11 states to expand and improve linkages between education and employment in existing longitudinal databases. These states are Florida, Iowa, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Missouri, North Dakota, Ohio, South Carolina, Texas and Virginia. Two additional states, Louisiana and Minnesota, will use the grant funds to develop and implement new systems.

States will achieve [multiple goals](#) during the three-year grant period. Among these are developing or improving state workforce longitudinal data systems; enabling workforce data to be matched with education data to create longitudinal data systems and the quality and breadth of the data in them; using longitudinal data to provide useful information about program operations; analyzing the performance of education and training programs; and providing user-friendly information to help consumers select the training and education programs that best suit their needs.

Workforce Data Quality Initiative Grant Awards

FL	Florida Agency for Workforce Innovation	\$1,000,000
LA	Louisiana Workforce Commission	\$999,863
MD	State of Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation	\$1,000,000
MN	Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development	\$1,000,000
ND	Job Service North Dakota	\$1,000,000
SC	South Carolina Department of Employment and Workforce	\$289,417
VA	Virginia Community College System	\$1,000,000

40 Percent of Bridge Programs in 47 States Use AEFLA Funds

The Workforce Strategy Center (WSC) recently released [results of its BridgeConnectSurvey](#), a snapshot of 515 bridge programs nationwide. Bridge programs are known by many names, such as integrated education and training, contextualized learning, and embedded skills programs. The programs assist students in obtaining the academic and technical skills they need to enter and succeed in postsecondary education and training as well as enhancing their employability. Responses from bridge programs in 47 states indicated that they used funds available under the *Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA)* to provide low-skilled adults with the English reading and writing as well as mathematics skills needed to succeed in a postsecondary credentialing or degree program. Thirty-six percent of respondents received assistance under Title I of the *Workforce Investment Act*. The survey also discovered that states having significant numbers of bridge programs, such as California, Illinois, Massachusetts, Michigan, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Texas, also reported establishing statewide policies and funded initiatives promoting bridge programs. Nationwide, 86 percent of bridge programs reported specifically targeting low-skilled adults and 57 percent targeted adults with limited English skills.

New Federal Website Provides Information and Tools About Youth Programs

The website findyouthinfo.gov has recently been established to help those who create, maintain, and strengthen effective youth programs, or who wish to do so. The website includes facts regarding youths, funding information, and tools to help assess community assets, generate maps of local and federal resources, search for evidence-based youth programs, and keep up-to-date on youth-related news. Youth topics include: bullying, positive youth development, transition-age youths (ages 16-24) and after-school programs.

In addition, the Interagency Working Group on Youth Programs (IWGYP) is hosting a series of listening sessions to inform the development of an overarching strategic plan for federal policy on youths. Since youths' ideas are essential in the IWGYP's process of developing a strategic plan for federal youth policy, the IWGYP strongly encourages adults to invite youths to nearby listening sessions and provide adults with a [tip sheet](#) to help adults prepare youths for participating in the sessions. The next listening session, [Youth Enrichment, Youth Engagement, Youth Mentoring, and Positive Youth Development](#), will be held on Dec. 2, 2010, in Washington, DC for youths and adults from DE, DC, MD, PA, VA, and WV.